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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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08/25/2001

Norman Ken Ouchi

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08/26/2005

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EXAMINER

FISCHER, ANDREW J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3627

DATE MAILED: 08/26/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/939,453

Applicant(s)

OUCHI, NORMAN KEN

Examiner

Andrew J. Fischer

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~ The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address ~
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 April 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 18-35 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 18-35 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgements

1. Applicant's amendment filed April 14, 2005 is acknowledged. Accordingly, claims 18-35 remain pending.
2. All references in this Office Action to the capitalized versions of "Applicant" refers specifically the Applicant of record. References to lower case versions of "applicant" or "applicants" refers to any or all patent "applicants." Unless expressly noted otherwise, references to "Examiner" in this Office Action refers to the Examiner of record while reference to or use of the lower case version of "examiner" or "examiners" refers to examiner(s) generally.
3. This Office Action is written in OACS. Because of this, the Examiner is unable to control formatting, paragraph numbering, font, spelling, line spacing, and/or other word processing issues. The Examiner sincerely apologies for these errors.

Specification

4. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 C.F.R. §1.75(d)(1), MPEP §608.01(o), and MPEP §2181.

Correction of the following is required:

- i. The "means for storing a pervious (sic) transaction between the second part number and the first part number" as recited in claim 24.
5. Additionally, the lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of *all* possible errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

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6. The amendments to the specification have not been entered because it is unclear as to where they must be inserted.

Claim Objections

7. The claims are objected to because the lines are crowded too closely together, making reading difficult. Substitute claims with lines one and one-half or double spaced on good quality paper are required. See 37 C.F.R. §1.52(b).
8. Claim 18 is objected to because it is missing grammatical markings (*e.g.* commas) separating the claimed phrases. Moreover, it is unclear if the indents are intended to interpret the claims.
9. Claim 24 is objected to because a typographical error exists. In particular, it is believed that “pervious” is meant to be previous.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

10. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

11. Claims 18-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two-prong test:

- (1) The invention must be within the technological arts; and
- (2) The invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

12. In this case, the claims do not produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. If Applicant’s specification supports such an amendment, the Examiner recommends, by way of

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example only, that Applicant recite that 'outputting the translation to a device' such as a computer monitor or printer.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112 2nd Paragraph

13. The following is a quotation of the 2nd paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

14. Claims 18-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims remain replete with errors. Some examples follow.

a. Claims 18 and 30 recites the limitation "the index" in lines 5 and 7 respectively.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

b. Also in claim 18, the phrase "correct and validate" does not make grammatical sense. Additionally, it is unclear if Applicant is using indents to help interpret the claims.

At least in claim 18, the indents do not make grammatical sense.

c. In claim 24, Applicant has failed to clearly link and associate the "means for phrase" to any corresponding structure. To help maintain compact prosecution, to avoid additional 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph rejections, and (if necessary) to aid Applicant in the event he appeals to the USPTO's Board of Patent Appeals and Inferences, the Examiner recommends Applicant review his claims. Upon review, for every means plus function or step plus function invoking 35 U.S.C. §112 6th paragraph identified by Applicant, Applicant should indicate the claimed function in addition to expressly setting forth the corresponding structure, material, or acts of the particular claimed function by

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referring to the specification by page and line number and/or drawings with reference to particular characters noted therein. Applicant should consider this actual notice that such review and indication as described in this paragraph should be made prior to *any* amendment to the claims. However if Applicant has previously indicated the claimed function and the corresponding structure, material, or acts corresponding to that function, Applicant need only point out their response (with reasonable particularity) in which the indication was made.

15. The Examiner finds that because the claims are indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112 2nd paragraph, it is impossible to properly construe claim scope at this time. See *Honeywell International Inc. v. ITC*, 68 USPQ2d 1023, 1030 (Fed. Cir. 2003) (“Because the claims are indefinite, the claims, by definition, cannot be construed.”). However, in accordance with MPEP §2173.06 and the USPTO’s policy of trying to advance prosecution by providing art rejections even though these claim are indefinite, the claims are construed and the art is applied *as much as practically possible*.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102

16. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. §102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office Action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States. . . .

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an

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international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

17. Claims 18-35, as understood by the Examiner, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Peterson et. al. (U.S. 6,324,522 B2)(“Peterson”). Peterson discloses the claimed invention including the ability to switch parts between various part numbers such as vendor number, manufacture part number, and assembly number.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

18. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office Action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

19. Claims 18-35, as understood by the Examiner, are alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Peterson.¹ It is the Examiner’s principle position that the claims are anticipated because of the inerencies noted above.

However if not inherent, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Peterson to include the approved manufacturer list. Such a modification would have helped prevent counterfeit parts—which one of ordinary skill in the art recognizes—tend to be inferior.

¹ See MPEP §2112 expressly authorizing alternative §102/§103 rejections when the question of inherency is present in the anticipation rejection.

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20. The Examiner concludes that Applicant has decided not to be his own lexicographer by indicating and defining claim limitations to have meanings other than their ordinary and accustomed meanings. To support this position, the Examiner relies on the following factual findings. First and as noted in the previous Office Action,² the Examiner has carefully reviewed the specification and prosecution history and can not locate any lexicographic definition(s). Second, the Examiner finds that not only has Applicant not pointed to definitional statements in his specification or prosecution history, Applicant has also not pointed to a term or terms in a claim with which to draw in those statements³ with the required clarity, deliberateness, and precision.⁴ Third, after receiving express notice in the previous Office Action of the Examiner's position that lexicography is not invoked,⁵ Applicant has not pointed out the "supposed errors" in the Examiner's position regarding lexicography invocation in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) (*i.e.* Applicant has not argued lexicography is invoked). Finally and to be sure of Applicant's intent, the Examiner also notes that Applicant has declined the Examiner's express

² See the "First Non Final Office Action" mailed January 13, 2005, Paragraph No. 14.

³ "In order to overcome this heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary meaning of claim language, it is clear that a party wishing to use statements in the written description to confine or otherwise affect a patent's scope must, *at the very least*, point to a term or terms in the claim with which to draw in those statements. [Emphasis added.]" *Johnson Worldwide Assocs. v. Zebco Corp.*, 175 F.3d 985, 989, 50 USPQ2d 1607, 1610 (Fed. Cir. 1999).

⁴ "The patentee's lexicography must, of course, appear 'with reasonable clarity, deliberateness, and precision' before it can affect the claim." *Renishaw PLC v. Marposs Societa' per Azioni*, 158 F.3d 1243, 1249, 48 USPQ2d 1117, 1121 (Fed. Cir. 1998) citing *In re Paulsen*, 30 F.3d 1475, 1480, 31 USPQ2d 1671, 1674 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

⁵ See again the First Non Final Office Action, Paragraph No. 14.

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invitation⁶ to be his own lexicographer.⁷ It remains the Examiner's position that these requirements were reasonable.⁸ Accordingly and for due process purposes, the Examiner gives notice that for the remainder of the examination process (and unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner), the heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary and accustomed meaning is not overcome; the claims therefore continue to be interpreted with their "broadest reasonable interpretation" *In re Morris*, 127 F.3d 1048, 1054, 44 USPQ2d 1023, 1027 (Fed. Cir. 1997).⁹ The Examiner now relies heavily and extensively on this interpretation.¹⁰ Unless

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ See *e.g. Fuji Photo Film Co. v. ITC*, 386 F.3d 1095, 72 USPQ2d 1769, 1773 (Fed. Cir. 2004) (noting that applicants' failure to correct the examiner's characterization of an element of claim interpretation is nevertheless an indication of how a claim should be interpreted since applicant declined the examiner's express invitation to correct a possible error in claim interpretation: "applicant's attention was called to the examiner's interpretation of [how the element was interpreted by the examiner, and] applicant was invited to correct the examiner's interpretation—an invitation the applicant did not accept.").

⁸ The Examiner's requirements on this matter were reasonable on at least two separate and independent grounds. First, the Examiner's requirements were simply an express request for clarification of how Applicant intend his claims to be interpreted so that lexicography (or even an *attempt* at lexicography) by Applicant was not inadvertently overlooked by the Examiner. Second, the requirements were reasonable in view of the USPTO's goals of compact prosecution, productivity with particular emphasis on reductions in both pendency and cycle time, and other goals as outlined in the USPTO's The 21st Century Strategic Plan, February 3, 2003 available at www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/strat21/index.htm (last accessed August 6, 2005).

⁹ See also *In re Bass*, 314 F.3d 575, 577, 65 USPQ2d 1156, 1158 (Fed. Cir. 2002) ("In examining a patent claim, the PTO must apply the broadest reasonable meaning to the claim language, taking into account any definitions presented in the specification. Words in a claim are to be given their ordinary and accustomed meaning unless the inventor chose to be his own lexicographer in the specification") (citations omitted); *In re Etter*, 756 F.2d 852, 858, 225 USPQ 1, 5 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (en banc); and MPEP §§ 2111 and 2111.01.

¹⁰ See 37 C.F.R. § 1.104(c)(3) which states in part: "the examiner may rely upon admissions by applicant . . . as to *any matter* affecting patentability [Emphasis added.]"

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expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the preceding claim interpretation principles in this paragraph apply to all examined claims currently pending.

21. Under the broadest reasonable interpretation standard noted above and unless expressly modified in this Office Action, the Examiner maintains his interpretations including the statements and/or definitions of claim limitations as noted in previous Office Action. Those previous definitions are part of the administrative record and, in accordance with *In re Morris*, are provided simply as a factual source to support the Examiner's claim interpretations (and ultimately the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences claim interpretations if necessary¹¹) during ex parte examination.

22. Additionally, the Examiner notes that "the PTO and the CCPA acknowledged product-by-process claims as an exception to the general rule requiring claims to define products in terms of structural characteristics." *Atlantic Thermoplastics Co. v. Faytex Corp.*, 970 F.2d 834, 845, 23 USPQ2d 1481, 1490 (Fed. Cir. 1992) (hereinafter "*Atlantic Thermoplastics v. Faytex I*"). Furthermore, the Federal Circuit "acknowledges that it has in effect recognized . . . product-by-process claims as exceptional." *Atlantic Thermoplastics v. Faytex I*, 970 F.2d at 847, 23 USPQ2d at 1491.

Because of this exceptional status, the Examiner has carefully reviewed the claims and it is the Examiner's position that the claims *do not* contain any product-by-process limitations whether in a conventional format or otherwise. If Applicant disagrees with the Examiner, the

¹¹ See *Gechter v. Davidson*, 116 F.3d 1454, 1460, 43 USPQ2d 1030, 1035 (Fed. Cir. 1997) ("[W]e hold that the Board is required to set forth in its opinions specific findings of fact and conclusions of law adequate to form a basis for our review.").

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Examiner respectfully requests Applicant in his next response to expressly point out any product-by-process claim(s) and their limitations so that they may be afforded their exceptional status and treated accordingly. Applicant is reminded that “even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself.” *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 697, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (citations omitted).¹² Failure by Applicant in his next response to also address this issue in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) or to be non-responsive to this issue entirely will be considered intent by Applicant *not* to recite any product-by-process limitations. Unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the preceding discussion on product-by-process principles applies to all examined claims currently pending.

Conclusion

23. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP §706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however,

¹² See also MPEP §2113.

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will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

24. References considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure are listed on form PTO-892. All references listed on form PTO-892 are cited in their entirety.

25. The following two (2) citations to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("MPEP") apply to this Office Action: MPEP citations to Chapters 100, 200, 500, 600, 700, 1000, 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500, 1700, 1800, 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500, 2600, and 2700 are from the MPEP 8th Edition, Rev. 2, May 2004. All remaining MPEP citations are from MPEP 8th Edition, August 2001.

26. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

27. Because this application is now final, Applicant is reminded of the USPTO's after final practice as discussed in MPEP §714.12 and §714.13 and that entry of amendments after final is *not* a matter of right. "The refusal of an examiner to enter an amendment after final rejection of claims is a matter of discretion." *In re Berger*, 279 F.3d 975, 984, 61 USPQ2d 1523, 1529 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (citations omitted). Furthermore, suggestions or examples of claim language provided by the Examiner are just that—suggestions or examples—and do not constitute a formal requirement mandated by the Examiner. Unless stated otherwise by an express indication that a

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claim is “allowed,” exemplary claim language provided by the Examiner to overcome a particular rejection or to change claim interpretation has *not been addressed* with respect to other aspects of patentability (*e.g.* §101 patentable subject matter, §112 1st paragraph written description and enablement, §112 2nd paragraph indefiniteness, and §102 and §103 prior art). Therefore, any claim amendment submitted under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 that incorporates an Examiner suggestion or example or simply changes claim interpretation will nevertheless require further consideration and/or search and a patentability determination as noted above.

28. In accordance with the USPTO’s goals of customer service, compact prosecution, and reduction of cycle time, the Examiner has made every effort to clarify his position regarding claim interpretation and any rejections or objections in this application. Furthermore, the Examiner has again provided Applicants with notice—for due process purposes—of his position regarding his factual determinations and legal conclusions. If Applicant disagrees with any additional factual determination or legal conclusion made by the Examiner in this Office Action whether expressly stated or implied,¹³ the Examiner respectfully reminds Applicant to properly traverse the Examiner’s position(s) in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) in his next properly filed response. By addressing these issues now, matters where the Examiner and Applicant agree can be eliminated allowing the Examiner and Applicant to focus on areas of disagreement (if any) with the goal towards allowance in the shortest possible time. If Applicant has any questions regarding the Examiner’s positions or has other questions regarding this communication or even previous communications, Applicant is strongly encouraged to contact Examiner Andrew J. Fischer whose telephone number is (571) 272-6779. If attempts to reach

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the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's immediate supervisor, Alexander Kalinowski, can be reached at (571) 272-6771. The fax number for facsimile responses is now (571) 273-8300.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Fischer", with a stylized, cursive script.

Andrew J. Fischer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3627

AJF
August 6, 2005

¹³ *E.g.*, if the Examiner rejected a claim under §103 with two references, although not directly stated, it is the Examiner's implied position that the references are analogous art.